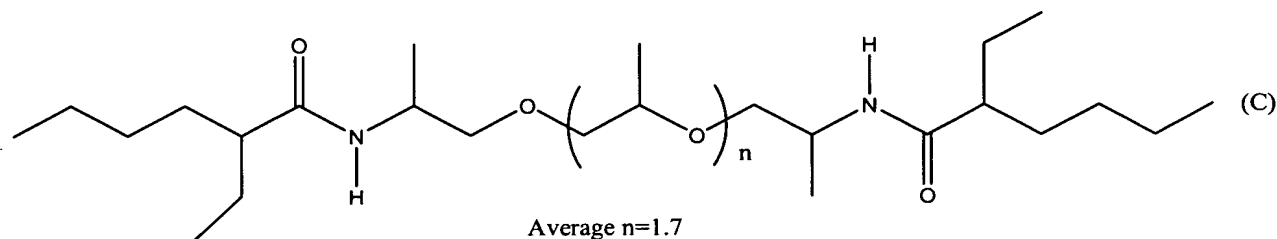


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-13 (canceled)

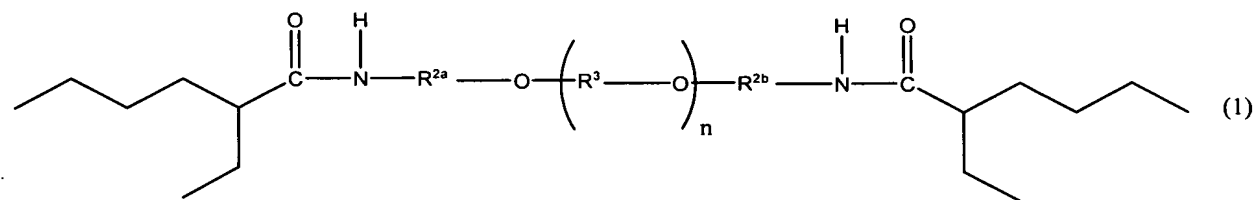
14. (previously presented) A diamide derivative which is represented by the following formula (C):



Claims 15-25 (canceled)

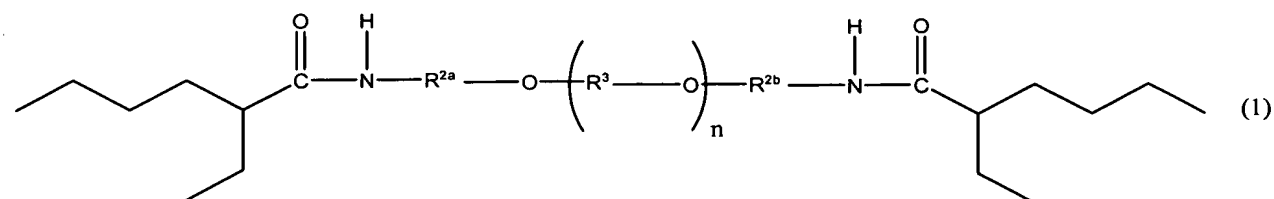
Claim 26: (new) A diamide derivative which is represented by the following formula

(1)



wherein,  $R^{2a}$  and  $R^{2b}$  are the same or different and each represents a divalent  $C_{1-6}$  hydrocarbon group,  $R^3$ 's are the same or different and each represents a divalent  $C_{2-6}$  hydrocarbon group and  $n$  stands for 1 to 100.

Claim 27 (new): A composition for external application, which comprises a diamide derivative represented by the following formula (1):



wherein,  $R^{2a}$  and  $R^{2b}$  are the same or different and each represents a divalent  $C_{1-6}$  hydrocarbon group,  $R^3$ s are the same or different and each represents a divalent  $C_{2-6}$  hydrocarbon group and n stands for 1 to 100.

Claim 28 (new): The composition for external application of claim 27, further comprising an intercellular lipid component of the horny layer.

Claim 29 (new): The composition for external application according to claim 28 wherein the intracellular lipid component of the horny layer is at least one member selected from the group consisting of ceramides, pseudoceramids, sphingoglycolipids, sphingophospholipids, sphingosines and derivatives thereof, sphinganine and derivatives thereof, higher fatty acids and cholesterol and derivatives thereof.

30. (new): The composition for external application according to claim 27, which is a cosmetic composition.

31. (new) The composition of claim 27, further comprises an oily base.

32. (new) The composition claim 31, wherein said oily base is at least one member selected from the group consisting of vegetable oils, animal oils, synthetic oils, fatty acids, natural glycerides and synthetic glycerides.

33. (new) The composition of claim 27, which comprises 0.001 to 5 wt. % of said diamide.

34. (new) The composition of claim 33, further comprising an anionic surfactant.

35. (new) The composition of claim 34, wherein said anionic surfactant is present in an amount of 5 to 30 wt. %.

36. (new) The composition of claim 27, which comprises 0.1 to 20 wt. % of said diamide.

37. (new) The composition of claim 36, further comprising at least one surfactant selected from the group consisting of cationic surfactant and non-ionic surfactant.

38. (new) The composition of claim 37, wherein said surfactant is present in an amount of 0.1 to 50 wt.%.

39. (new) The composition of claim 27, wherein said composition comprises 0.01 to 5 wt.% of said diamide.

40. (new) The composition of claim 39, wherein said composition further comprises a nonionic surfactant.

41. (new) The composition of claim 40, wherein said nonionic surfactant is present in an amount of 0.01 to 20 wt.%.

42. (new) The composition for external application of claim 27, wherein n stands for 1 to 10.

43. (new) The diamide derivative of claim 26, wherein n stands for 1 to 10.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Support for claims 26 and 27 is found in claims 1 and 14 as originally presented. Support for claim 28 is found in claim 2 as originally presented. Support for claim 29 is found in claim 3 as originally presented. Support for claim 30 is found in claim 4 as originally presented. Support for claims 31 and 32 is found on page 17, lines 22-24 of the specification. Support for claims 33, 36 and 39 is found on page 19, lines 10-15 of the specification. Support for claims 34-35 is found on page 19, lines 20-24 of the specification. Support for claims 37-38 is found on page 20, lines 9-11 of the specification. Support for claims 40-41 is found on page 20, lines 12-16 of the specification. Support for claims 42 and 43 is found on page 6, lines 17-18 of the specification. No new matter would be added to this application by entry of this amendment.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 14 and 26-43 will now be active in this application.